1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

302 the method of wearing the hair under different conditions corresponding to those of males.

[765] After a funeral the Tarthar division of the Todas except the Melgarsol shave their heads, and this may also happen in connexion with vows made at the Hindu temple at Nanjankudi or elsewhere.

[852] The hair of a child is shaved about the third month of life (see p. 332), so that the head has the appearance shown in Figs. 63 and 64. The head is shaved on the top and sides, and in a strip from the top to the forehead, so that three locks are left, two in front, called the *mîkuti* (*? meikuti*), and one behind, called the *kut*.

In the case of a girl, there is some difference in the method of shaving according to the position of the child in the family. If a girl is the eldest of the family, she wears three locks like a boy, but younger girls and the eldest girl, if she should have an elder brother, wear only the two front locks, the *mîkuti*.

SKIN-MARKS

304 751 755 The only kind of skin-mark made on males takes the form of a cicatrix on the right shoulder and, less commonly, on the elbow. It is produced by means of a stick made hot by the drill method of producing fire, exactly as in the production of fire for ceremonial purposes. The operation is not, however, accompanied by any ceremonial and may be performed by anyone. The marks are made when a boy is about twelve years old, at which age he begins to milk the buffaloes. The object of the marking is to cure the pain arising from the fatigue of milking. If the operation has not the desired result and the boy still feels the fatiguing effect of milking, a second mark is made, and occasionally a third or fourth may be necessary. In one case, in which a man had three marks one on the shoulder and two on the elbow, the third mark was not made till he was fifteen or sixteen years of age, three or four years after the first mark had been produced. This was done because, even after this lapse of time, he still suffered 304 from aching in his arm after milking the buffaloes. Another

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

304 man had four scars on the shoulder, this being the largest number I observed.

Occasionally I observed a man without any of these scars, and, in more than one of these cases, the reason given was that the man had been one of a large family and had not had
[752] to do much milking. The cicatrices are usually raised well above the surrounding skin and are often distinct lumps of scar tissue (keloid). This appears to be the result of special treatment of the burn. A leaf called *kudiers* is put on the wound with butter, and this keeps it open for a considerable time. If the wound remains open too long, another leaf, called *pöturers*, is used to hasten the healing.

[755] Similar, but less raised, marks are occasionally seen on the wrist or elsewhere. In men these are always the result of treatment for pain or illness and are made in the same way by means of a hot stick. Sometimes a metal instrument called *sunurkudi* is now used for this purpose.

The ceremonial burns made on the wrists of women during the first pregnancy have already been fully considered.

304 Tattooing is only practised by women. The patterns
531 consist of rings and dots arranged in straight lines, and they are most commonly to be seen on the chest, shoulders, and upper parts of the arms.[1]

304 I believe that there is some kind of ceremonial connected with tattooing, but unfortunately I failed to obtain satisfactory
521 information about it. When I began the subject one day, I received an intimation that it was not a matter to be discussed in public, and later the subject slipped my attention and was never properly investigated.

304 The tattooing is performed by certain women, but it seemed that any woman who had learned how to tattoo might under-
463 take the business. The following are at present recognised as
465 experts: Achaveli (43), Sinpurs and Edjog (20), Sinpurs being probably the same woman who acts as one of the *utkòren*. The woman who tattoos is given eight or twelve annas and she also receives food.

304 The tattooing must not take place before puberty, but it may be done either before or after childbirth.

[1] Some patterns are given by Mr. Thurston, *Bulletin*, i. 1896, pl. xii.

2: Marshall G-5 (1870) 1873 Toda

that the practice of staining the skin is quite unknown to them. CHAP. IV.

They—the women—however, mark or tattoo portions of the body, terming it Gurtu. Dr. Shortt has recorded these marks so carefully, that I cannot do better than quote his own words:—'The women,' he writes, 'are tattooed about the arms, chest and legs in the following manner: Three semicircles of dots on the outer side of each arm, each semicircle containing nine points; a double row of dots across the upper part of the chest, about an inch below the clavicle, each row consisting of thirty-six points, about the eighth of an inch apart, the rows themselves being one inch distant from each other. Those on the arms have an intervening space of two inches; two rows, containing eight or nine points each, on the shoulders, commencing in front where the lines on the chest terminate, and extending backwards to a point on a level with the superior semicircle on the arm; a solitary dot in the centre of the chin; two circular lines of dots on each leg, the upper circle containing twenty-five and the lower only twenty dots; and a row across the dorsum of each foot, numbering from nine to eleven points. The terminal point of each row is marked by a ring, the interlinear points being simple dots, frequently taking the form of squares.'[1]

The most characteristic personal ornament amongst them, is that carried by women; an extremely clumsy metal ring—Tulwaji—weighing sometimes as much as five pounds, which is carried on the upper part of the arm, and worn according to taste; sometimes one ring on each arm, or sometimes a pair on one arm, kept apart—so that the skin may not be pinched between them—by means of a slip of padding. These rings are often built half of copper, half of brass, so that one day they may be worn presenting the one metal, and another day turned to show the other. In order that the arm may be introduced into this ponderous mass of brass, the ring is cut

[1] Shortt, 'Tribes on the Neilgherries.'

CHAP. IV.

Perhaps the ornaments, likely to be equally primitive with these armlets, are the heavy bunches of coiled iron wire or of little bits of the same metal, worn like charms from both waist and elbow. Very tasteless and heavy. 301

I do not see, in the form of their finger and ear rings, necklaces and girdles, anything deserving of remark. They do not appear to me to be especially characteristic of the Todas, but rather, just what they can purchase from the tribes surrounding them. The photographs of women, show the nature of necklace worn as marriage tokens. [439]

The nose and lips are never perforated or ornamented; nor are bangles for the ankles, or bells on the toes, worn. [304]

You may distinguish a boy from a girl by the mode in which the hair is cut. With the latter, the entire back-hair is kept short from infancy till the approach to marriageable age. The former have a band of hair cut short, or shaved, along the head, from the nape of the neck, over the poll to the top of the forehead, and a cross slip carried over the top of the head from ear to ear. The smallest male infants are often so distinguished. 302

The wearing apparel of the sexes is identical. First comes the loin-cloth—Kûvn—corresponding to the Hindustani Lungoti, over which the toga—Putkuli—measuring about six feet long by four feet broad, made of coarse unbleached cotton, and worn double; ornamented at the two ends with red and blue stripes, and sometimes with a little embroidery in blue cotton. This mantle is sufficiently large to envelope a woman most completely. A decent though cumbersome garment to wear, better suited for sitting and sleeping in than for any purposes of labour. Pockets are made in the corners of the mantle, by sewing the double cloth together at those places. This dress is more properly Drâvidian than mere Toda, and is purchased in the bazaars. 291 439

They are a dirty people; yet very much of their dirt arises 000

2: Marshall G-5 (1870) 1873 Toda

CHAP. XXII.

pointing to an interesting stage in Turanian progress; that whence various ancient creeds have sprung and ramified.

The Toda religion has not the slightest sympathy with idolatry, nor does it pay attention to natural objects, as trees or rivers: to birds, beasts, or reptiles: nor to the elements. No offerings to a God, whether of flesh—human or animal—or fruit of the soil, are made: no human victims and no self-torture. It is not that they have risen above such prejudices; they seem to me rather, not to have attained the stage when religious observances commence. Circumcision is not performed. The memory of forefathers is piously regarded, but the feeling has not expanded through veneration into any form of hero-worship.

They believe in transmigration, but whether of soul or body probably few have formed very distinct ideas. The funeral service seems to favour the idea that the transition of the soul is the dogma which, though unexpressed, lies like an instinct in their minds: coupled with the idea that the soul is a living solid, a real duplicate Toda requiring food. But the whole scheme of their observances is so illogical, that it is impossible to deduce therefrom any clear definition of a creed.

Endeavour has been made in Chapters VIII. and IX. to convey, in brief terms, the reasons for my confidence, that sobriety, and general abstinence from exciting meat diet, are largely natural to this people. The practice certainly forms at present no part of their religious observance.

I would place the state of their belief in witchcraft and the work of demons and other unseen agencies, somewhat on a parallel with that of their knowledge of Divine work. Neither one nor the other, troubles them much. Perhaps I may best define the relative feeling, by saying, that they fear the former and hope most of the latter. Though they do, to a certain extent, practise demonolatry, they do not do so with the enthusiasm of other primitive races of South India. Indeed I had not one opportunity of witnessing feats of exorcism.

196 521 192 602

Thus aḍð–, "dig," is allowed when a word for "pit" is used with it, but forbidden when used with a word meaning "woman," in which case it means "rape;" so also kɯ ʃt–, "pluck up by the roots," which with a word for woman means "rape." The word nɑrtj–, "make walk," is permitted when ɯr, "buffalo," is compounded with it in the sense "drive buffaloes on migration" or "pay a buffalo as a fine for pollution of the dairy,"[10] or when in combination with a word for "bead" it means "string (beads)," or in other uses not involving indecency; when a word for "woman" is used with it, it means "have sexual intercourse with" and is forbidden. So also the very common verb pɑtj–, "seize, take," which with a word for woman means "have sexual intercourse with." The stem oɪj–, "become," is very frequent, usually in compounds; when used by itself, it means "menstruate" and is forbidden. The word poɪṭj–, "shout" is forbidden in the sense "(woman) cries out during sexual intercourse." Again ɑtvɑt is an imperative with literal meaning "in that direction-seize." It usually is found in contexts where it means "take this and hold it stretched out that way;" it is forbidden in this sense since the same utterance can also mean as applied to a woman "have sexual intercourse in animal position." It can also be used as an exclamation "nonsense!" and this use is not forbidden. In the same way pɯn, "gold bangle in a dairy," is forbidden when used in the sense "privates of a young girl."

[841] [304]

Similarly poɪθj, "moss," may not be mentioned since a variety of moss is used during menstruation as a sanitary napkin. Women are tattooed and any reference to the process of tattooing or to the markings is forbidden. The word for "tabooed words," kɪɪpoṇt, lit. "inferior-words," is itself tabooed.

578 521

These language taboos produce an interesting result in the field of social habits. Wordy quarrels about marriage arrangements, the financing and details of ceremonies, and other affairs are very common among Toda men. These quarrels most frequently take place at the large gatherings at ceremonies of all kinds. Since on most such occasions, especially at funerals, many women are present, the probable presence of ɯɯdmortkvæɪdvoj or poʃjoɪʃ within hearing prevents the use of indecent language by the quarrelers. My informants tell me that this is the rule also in quarrels at purely male gatherings; evidently indecency has not become an element in abuse under any circumstances, since its prohibition in some circumstances has prevented the growth of a habit. I am also told that quite recently, with the relaxing of all taboos and the example of Tamil speakers, a certain amount of indecency has crept into the language of abuse.

[10] See Rivers, pp. 293–305.

7:Thurston E-5 (no date)1909
AW60 Toda AW60

The typical Toda man is above medium height, well proportioned and stalwart, with leptorhine nose, regular features, and perfect teeth. The nose is, as noted by Dr. Rivers, sometimes distinctly rounded in profile. An attempt has been made to connect the Todas with the lost tribes; and, amid a crowd of them collected together at a funeral, there is no difficulty in picking out individuals, whose features would find for them a ready place as actors on the Ober Ammergau stage, either in leading or subordinate parts. The principal characteristic, which at once distinguishes the Toda from the other tribes of the Nilgiris, is the development of the pilous (hairy) system. The following is a typical case, extracted from my notes. Beard luxuriant, hair of head parted in middle, and hanging in curls over forehead and back of neck. Hair thickly developed on chest and abdomen, with median strip of dense hairs on the latter. Hair thick over upper and lower ends of shoulder-blades, thinner over rest of back; well developed on extensor surface of upper arms, and both surfaces of forearms; very thick on extensor surfaces of the latter. Hair abundant on both surfaces of legs; thickest on outer side of thighs and round knee-cap. Dense beard-like mass of hair beneath gluteal region (buttocks). Superciliary brow ridges very prominent. Eyebrows united across middle line by thick tuft of hairs. A dense growth of long straight hairs directed outwards on helix of both ears, bearing a striking resemblance to the hairy development on the helix of the South Indian bonnet monkey (*Macacus sinicus*). The profuse hairy development is by some Todas attributed to their drinking "too much milk."

Nearly all the men have one or more raised cicatrices, forming nodulous growths (keloids) on the right shoulder. These scars are produced by burning the skin

7:Thurston E-5 (no date)1909
AW60 Toda AW60

These scars are produced by burning the skin
304 with red-hot sticks of *Litsæa Wightiana* (the sacred fire-
[824] stick). The Todas believe that the branding enables
them to milk the buffaloes with perfect ease, or as
[755] Dr. Rivers puts it, that it cures the pain caused by
the fatigue of milking. "The marks," he says, "are
made when a boy is about twelve years old, at which age
he begins to milk the buffaloes." About the fifth month
[843] of a woman's first pregnancy, on the new-moon day, she
goes through a ceremony, in which she brands herself,
or is branded by another woman, by means of a rag
rolled up, dipped in oil and lighted, with a dot on the
carpo-metacarpal joint of each thumb and on each wrist.
142 The women are lighter in colour than the men, and
the colour of the body has been aptly described as of a
café-au-lait tint. The skin of the female children and
young adults is often of a warm copper hue. Some of
[302] the young women, with their raven-black hair dressed in
glossy ringlets, and bright glistening eyes, are distinctly
good-looking, but both good looks and complexion are
[145] short-lived, and the women speedily degenerate into
uncomely hags. As in Maori land, so in Toda land,
[562] one finds a race of superb men coupled to hideous
women, and, with the exception of the young girls, the
fair sex is the male sex. Both men and women cover
291 their bodies with a white mantle with blue and red lines,
[439] called putkŭli, which is purchased in the Ootacamund
[531] bazar, and is sometimes decorated with embroidery
worked by the Toda women. The odour of the person
147 of the Todas, caused by the rancid butter which they
[294] apply to the mantle as a preservative reagent, or with
[231] which they anoint their bodies, is quite characteristic.
[302] With a view to testing his sense of smell, long after
our return from Paikara, I blindfolded a friend who had
accompanied me thither, and presented before his nose

7:Thurston E-5 (no date)1909
AW60 Toda AW60

a cloth, which he at once recognised as having something to do with the Todas. 147

In former times, a Badaga could be at once picked out from the other tribes of the Nilgiri plateau by his wearing a turban. At the present day, some Toda elders and important members of the community (*e.g.*, monegars or headmen) have adopted this form of head-gear. The men who were engaged as guides by Dr. Rivers and myself donned the turban in honour of their appointment. 292 177 [554]

Toda females are tattooed after they have reached puberty. I have seen several multiparæ, in whom the absence of tattoo marks was explained either on the ground that they were too poor to afford the expense of the operation, or that they were always suckling or pregnant—conditions, they said, in which the operation would not be free from danger. The dots and circles, of which the simple devices are made up,* are marked out with lamp-black made into a paste with water, and the pattern is pricked in by a Toda woman with the spines of *Berberis aristata*. The system of tattooing and decoration of females with ornaments is summed up in the following cases:— 304 [386]

1. Aged 22. Has one child. Tattooed with three dots on back of left hand. Wears silver necklet ornamented with Arcot two-anna pieces; thread and silver armlets ornamented with cowry (*Cypræa moneta*) shells on right upper arm; thread armlet ornamented with cowries on left forearm; brass ring on left ring finger; silver rings on right middle and ring fingers. Lobes of ears pierced. Ear-rings removed owing to grandmother's death. [531] [301] [765]

* *See* Madras Museum Bull., IV, 1896, pl. XII. [113]

7: Thurston E-5 (no date) 1909
AW60 Toda AW60

304 [531] 2. Aged 28. Tattooed with a single dot on chin; rings and dots on chest, outer side of upper arms, back of left hand, below calves, above ankles, and across dorsum of feet. Wears thread armlet ornamented with young cowries on right forearm; thread armlet and two [301] heavy ornamental brass armlets on left upper arm; ornamental brass bangle and glass bead bracelet on left wrist; brass ring on left little finger; two steel rings on left ring finger; bead necklet ornamented with cowries.

[531] 3. Aged 35. Tattooed like the preceding, with the addition of an elaborate device of rings and dots on the back.

[301] 4. Aged 35. Linen bound round elbow joint, to prevent chafing of heavy brass armlets. Cicatrices of sores in front of elbow joint, produced by armlets.

5. Aged 23. Has one child. Tattooed only below calves, and above ankles.

141 The following are the more important physical measurements of the Toda men, whom I have examined:—

	Av.	Max.	Min.
	CM.	CM.	CM.
Stature	169·8	186·8	157·6
Cephalic length ...	19·4	20·4	18·2
Do. breadth ...	14·2	15·2	13·3
Do. index ...	73·3	81·3	68·7
Nasal height ...	4·7	4·9	4·6
Do. breadth ...	3·6	3·8	3·4
Do. index ...	74·9	79·9	70·

Allowing that the cephalic index is a good criterion of racial or tribal purity, the following analysis of the Toda indices is very striking:—

69 ◆◆
70 ◆◆◆◆◆◆◆
71 ◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆

13: Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW60 Toda AW60

302 The men are profusely bearded and wear their hair "bobbed", in a heavy mop without a parting. The women, when adult and married, dress theirs in very many long curls hanging down to their shoulders. They are elaborately tattooed on chin, torso, arms, ●304 knees and feet, in imitation of necklaces, bracelets and bangles. The face is done before maturity, the arms, knees and feet after, while the necklace is added after the first child is born. Both sexes wear the 291 same clothes except for the under-garments: a toga-like wrap, the *pulkuli*, white with edges striped red and black and sometimes enhanced by embroidery of the same colours. The Todas must be one of the few peoples in the world among whom men and women are dressed alike.

161 For the last decade the tribe has been a dying one, and from the personal census which I took with Kanvarsathi[1] in 1949, it appeared that there were only 488 Todas left. I give this census below; it was taken according to the principal mads, the names of which are given here in Toda, and not in Badaga which is otherwise the usual practice in the Nilgiris (for the corresponding appellations, see Rivers, *The Todas*, Appendix III, p. 734 and following):

103 No.	Name of *mads* (in Toda)	Men	Women	Children	Total
162 1	Karsh	12	8	0	20
2	Kishkier	4	7	2	13
621 3	Kiüshu	7	6	1	14
4	Melgarsh	12	11	7	30
5	Mign	5	4	1	10
6	Poln	5	5	1	11
7	Tör	3	4	1	8
8	Paletkwar	4	3	3	10
9	Or	5	4	0	9
10	Kuur	3	2	1	6
11	Arjmad	2	1	0	3
12	Penavarsh	7	2	1	10
13	Nattersh	12	8	11	31
14	Nirgodsh	2	1	1	4
15	Mörkor	3	2	4	9
16	Tögor	2	3	0	5
17	Apersgor	3	3	0	6
18	Pakharkwur	2	2	0	4
19	Kakhwurkh	13	8	3	24
20	Paghor	7	4	4	15

[1] My interpreter, see Appendix 2.

13: Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW60 Toda AW60

child, and salutes it in the characteristic Toda fashion, which consists of putting his head under each of the little boy's feet.

Naming sometimes also takes place at the *tersamtpimi*, but because this ceremony can only be held on the day after the second funeral (*marvainolker*) of a Tardharsh man, it is usual now to give a boy his name at the *per vasthpimi*. For the other occasion he has to wait approximately three years, and then when such a funeral has taken place, his *mun* will come to the village where he is living the day afterwards with a piece of wood of the wild rose. He will split the stick into two pieces, and grasping a lock of the boy's hair will cut it off with a piece of sharpened iron if he is a Tardharsh, and with an ordinary knife if he be a Teivilkh. The child will be given its name now by the maternal uncle if this has not already been done earlier at the face-uncovering, and it will be promised a calf.

The hair of little girls is also cut as in the *per vasthpimi* ceremony, but it is done privately without any fuss, by the child's mother. The *tersamptpimi* ritual of cutting a lock is held exclusively for boys and never for girls. Its main provision seems to be the taking of a lock of hair by the *mun*, giving a name being purely incidental, and actually hardly ever done nowadays. At approximately the age of ten, the hair of boys is allowed to grow again, and that of girls is curled and dressed in the traditional manner.

Toda men have to have their ears pierced, regardless of whether they wear rings in the holes or not. In the case of Teivilkhs, they cannot be priests unless this has been done, and in that of the Tardharsh, they cannot officiate as *tarvalikartmokh* before it has taken place. The operation is performed at any time before the subject is twenty years old, or sometimes at this age, and is the occasion of much feasting. Usually a number of young boys are taken all together, as a means of avoiding the great expense involved each time.

The piercing is done either on a Wednesday or on a Saturday, and only when no one is in a period of impurity following upon a death in a family (*ker*). Each boy is attended by his maternal uncle and by a man belonging to the moiety other than that of which he himself is a member. The *mun* pierces one of the ears, while the Tardharsh or the Teivilkh as the case may be, does the other. The instrument used is a piece of a gold ring sharpened to a needle-point. When all is finished, the boys bow down low to the attending crowd, and everyone is given food to eat by the families of those who were operated upon. Women, although they sometimes wear ear-rings, never have their

13: Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW60 Toda AW60

ears pierced ceremonially, this again being reserved exclusively for men, for whom the utilitarian motive of the ritual seems to be completely non-existent. Toda boys put on the *kuvn* (perineal band) when they are five years old. The girls are given their wraps at the age of three. Children are separated from each other in accordance with their sex when, at eight, they start their respective social occupations.

It will be apparent from the above that members of the male sex receive preferential treatment among the Todas. This is something which strikes the observer at once, the advantageous social role of the men being very much in contrast to the subordinate one of the women. Nevertheless, it cannot be said that representatives of the female sex are, on the whole, badly treated. On the contrary, they have a free and easy look about them, and are, as a rule, well-cared for by their men folk. It is merely evident that they suffer from some very distinct social disabilities.

Thus Toda women are expected to deal with such household duties as pounding the grain in the house, sifting it, sweeping out the hut, making the *ertiilkh* or sleeping platform and seat inside the *arsh* with cow-dung and mud, mending clothes and sometimes embroidering. They are also in charge of cooking, although Rivers thought, erroneously, that they could not deal with this domestic duty. They may also milk the ordinary buffaloes or *putir*, something which Rivers also mistakenly denies. There are, on the other hand, a number of feminine 'musts'. A Toda woman is obliged to greet all male relatives by putting her head under the man's feet in what is known as the *kalmelpudithti* salutation. When she goes back and forth from the *mad*, she is compelled to follow a special path, the *majvatitthkalvol*, and may not use the ordinary one taken by men and outsiders. A stone, the *majvatvaiirn*, marks the point nearest to the dairy-temple at which she must stop. It is here that butter-milk (*maj*) is distributed to the womenfolk every evening at sunset by the dairy priests. They must not handle it, furthermore, when they are menstruating.

Woman may only exceptionally enter temples at funerals when the body of a man rests in the ante-chamber. They are excluded from most religious ceremonies and at the yearly procession through the village of Kiur, they must vacate the *mad* completely before its arrival. Women are not allowed to attend the sacred buffaloes (*postir*), or even to approach their pens. They may not drink their milk and are only allowed the buttermilk and the butter after it has been processed by the dairyman-priest. They cannot cross the dairy's stream (*pali nipa*),